

U.S. Patent Application No. 10/674,570
Amendment dated March 11, 2005
Reply to Office Action of December 20, 2004

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

On page 7, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 6 and ending at line 12 as follows:

For sputtering target assemblies with a backing plate comprised of a material that hydrides, such as titanium, both the tantalum or niobium target blank and backing plate are converted to their native metal hydride.—~~here~~ Here, the friable tantalum or niobium hydride is partitioned from the friable hydrided backing plate by physical means such as gravity separation, flotation, air classification, or electrostatic separation. To facilitate the separation process, the hydrided materials can first be converted into a fine powder using standard crushing, grinding, or milling techniques.